C 25641
23060 SL

REPRODUCED FROM THE COPY IN THE

HENRY E. HUNTINGTON LIBRARY

FOR REFERENCE ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION

A declaration and publication of the moſt worthy Prince of Orange,

contaynyng the cauſe of his neceſſary defence againſt the Duke of Alba.

¶ *Tranſlated out of French into Engliſh, and cõpared by other copies in diuers languages.*

PSALM. XCIIII.

They gather them together againſt the ſoule of the righteous, and cõdemne the innocent bloud. But the Lord is my refuge and my God is the rocke of myne hope. And he will recompence them their wickednes, and deſtroy them in their owne malice: yea, the Lord our God ſhall deſtroy them.

¶ Imprinted at London by Iohn Day, beneath S. Martins ouer Aldersgate.

PSALM. XCIII.

We William by the grace of God Prince of Orange, Earle of Naſſaw, Catſenellebogen, Vianen, Dietz, Bueren, and Leerdam, Baron of Breda. &c. After all due and friendly commendations, giue to weete to all thoſe that ſhall ſee or read this preſent declaration.

(.·.)

ALthough that (to our ſeming) it be not neceſſary to declare here at large the occaſyon that moueth vs with our Allies & confederates, to vſe this begon & enterpriſed defence, (not for any great pleaſure that we take therein, but rather through vnauoyde reaſons and conſtraintes) againſt the vnreaſonable and horryble practiſes,

tiles, (the like not heretofore heard of, practised, or executed of the Duke of Alba, his adherents, and bloud thirsty rabble [illegible] in the low Countrey. Nothing doubting but that all good and godly me, will hold us for more than excused, knowing our nature so enclined to peace, & therewith the faithfull and diligent duties which we vsed, during the time of tumult and sedition: employing body, goods, and honor, to the profit of his Maiesty and Countrey. Seeing also the confiscations, prizes, and withholding of our countrey, subiects, and goods, the blasphemous Proclamations, and iniuries against all right and reason offred vnto our person: And also that this our so iust & reasonable defence, (which with Gods furtherance we hope to goe thorow with) tendeth to none other end, but first and chiefly to the aduancing of the honor of God and his word, to the profit of his Maiesty, countrey, and subiects, and likewise of the Emperiall Maiesty our soueraigne Lord and his welbeloued sonne: which in time to come (as true foretellers of the said countrey) pretend right thereto: likewise the rooting out of the great (not euer to[illegible]re heard of, & more

than

[illegible] barbarous) fury and rage of the Duke of Alba and his adherēts, which they haue of long time vsed and put in effect.

Neuertheles we haue thought good, publikely to declare by these presents, the vnauoydable occasions, by which we with our Allies and frendes, haue bene cōstrained and enforced to take in hand this our defence: principally to put away all suspicion of rebellion, which we haue fled, & mortally hated all the dayes of our life.

First we are not ignorant, that it is manifest to all the world, how and after what māner, (through the practises and fetches of the Cardinall of Granuelle, with other couetous and bloud thirsty (which vnder the colour and cloake of the religion, pretended catholick) sought none other thing but the diminishing of the honor of God, the authority of the king, and the weale of the Commons, and louing nothing more than their proper and particular profit, the vndoing and destruction of other good men, where through the intollerable Inquisition, hath bene put forth, with the vnmerciful placcards of the execution therof: notwithstanding that we and other our

[illegible] went about by all meanes to dis-
swade them from it, seing and considering
the great euils & inconueniences that alre-
dy sprang therof, & the great likelyhode of
more to ensue, they nothing regarding our
humble sutes therein: such I say (not long
since) haue brought and thrust in the sayd
Inquisition into this low countrey. Wher-
by is come to passe, that vnder coloure of
the said Inquisition, the Inquisitors and
dissembling hipocrites, haue with all outra-
ges procéded against such poore innocēts
and faithfull people, as desire to liue acco-
ding to the pure doctrine of the Gospell.
First by confiscation of their godes both
moueable and immoueable, thē by banish-
ment, torment and tortures, by fire, water,
gibbet, by prisons & otherwise, dispatching
them in corners, by meanes as wel vnlaw-
full as lawfull.

All which tyrannies and persecutions
vntill this present are nothing assuaged or
diminished, but rather since the vnhappy
entry of the sayd Duke of Alba into the
sayd low Countreys, from day to day are
encreased and augmented: so that daylye
they inuent new torments and execution
against

againſt ỹ poore people, yea ſuch as not only Chriſtians, but the very Turkes and Sarazens would haue pity and compaſſyon of. I will not for ſhame reherſe the vnſpeakeable iniuryes and villanies that are daily committed by the ſoldiors of the ſayd Duke of Alba, ſo that there is no good mã, but had rather chooſe to die, than to ſée ſuch cruelty and tyranny executed, both vpon him and his, before his face.

And ſéeing that ſuch cruelties and tyrannies vſed by the ſayde Duke of Alba and his adherentes, couetous and bloudthirſty perſons, doe wholy repugne the cõtractes, letters ſealed, and promiſes made betweene his ſaid royall Maieſty, and thoſe of the low Countrey, yea againſt the very othe that his Maieſty ſware and promiſed: whereby we may ſée and clearly perceiue, that the ſayd Duke of Alba abuſeth the charge that he hath obtained of his ſayde Maieſty, only for his owne auarice and deſire of bloud, to the damage and hinderance of his ſaid Maieſty, and the deſtruction and ruine of his faithfull ſubiects, chiefly wyth this horrible fury and tyranny that he vſeth towards thoſe poore people, (no dout)

against the kings will, who (according to his accustomed clemency and gentlenesse) neuer minded any such thing: This to preuent, there is none other meane to withstand the sayd cruelties, (considering also that the passage or accesse to his Maiestye is shut vp from vs,) but this our present & vnauoydable defence.

For although that heretofore the Duchesse of Parma. &c. at that time Gouernesse for his Maiesty in the low countreis, hath expresly permitted and agreed to the preaching of the word of God, (to the end to auoid such imminent perils and daungers, as at that time threatned the said countrey,) with promise that none should attempt any euil against such as had heard the said preaching, or hereafter wold heare them: which at commaundement of her highnes we caused to be published through all the Countreys vnder our gouernement, binding vs and our person, that the aforesayd shoulde bene inuiolably obserued towards the subiects of his sayd Maiesty.

All this notwithstanding, the said Duke of Alba and his adherentes haue constrained diuers of the Vassals and Subiects of

his

his Maiestie to anoyd the country, and that for none other cause, but for that they haue bene at suche Sermons, and haue shewed themselues affectionate to that which they found agreable to the word of God.

And after they had brought it in, wyth impertinent Citations, & agaynst all right and iustice, without obseruing of order, custome or vse of proceesse, they haue proceded agaynst them by confiscation and violating of their goodes, as well moueable as immoueable, and all vnder coulor of Iustice.

And the troth is, that for religions sake diuers notable, honorable, and good men as well by fire, swoorde, as other horrible meanes, without cause and reason, yea horribly and tyrannously, both publicklye and priuely, haue bene executed, some in darke prisons, other through other tortures and horrible paynes and tormentes, after they had suffered diuers vnspeakeable tiránies haue lost theyr lyues innocently and without cause, yea euen to this day such execrable and horrible executions are put in vre, to the vtter destruction of the whole country, but especally of the poore Christians oppressed, of which there are manye in that countrye.

And to this effect, it is not long since they rowout the whole low country, at one present tyme, in one nyght, thorough all the townes, a great number of them that they suspected of such religion, were taken prisoners, contrarye to all privilegies, lawes, contractes, and frædomes, which hys Maiestie him selfe (as is aforesayd) had agræd and geuen them, yea such as he both sware and promised vnto them.

Also how they violently procéde to the preiudice and interest of the sayde privilegies, contracts, and frædomes, to the confiscation of gwdes moueable and immoueable, vsing and intreating the poore prisoners at their pleasure, and scratching vnto them selues the gwdes of those, that wrongfully and against all right and iustice haue bene driuen away, condemned, and slayne, and by this meanes haue brought the aforesayd country (who notwythstanding, the better to shew their humble obedience towardes hys maiestie, as to their soueraygne Prince & Lord vsed no kinde of resistance) into extreme bondage and vnspeakable misery and daunger. And if their wicked purpose, grædy couetousnes, and bloudthirstines

nes

wes be not preuented, it is lyke to fall into greater. Wythout consideration of the great faythfulnes ỹ his low coũtry shewed in contributing so often, so louingly, so willingly, as well to his Maiesty, as to hys wel beloued father Charles of most worthy memory, so manye notable giftes, as amount to many millions of florins, and infinite summes, and especially in these last wars, when so willingly they gaue about fourtye millions of florins. And that of late they haue offered to his sayd Maiesty three millions of florins, to obtaine leaue to preache the word of God, and to exercise the same, according to the writing of the Prophetes and Apostels.

And although that heretofore by the aduertising and soliciting of the Ladye Gouernesse aforesayd, he promised, at the request presented in the behalf of al the lords and Gentlemen, touching the abolishing of the Inquisition & Placartes of executiõ that they should not doubt them: neuertheles it is manifest, that vnder this present tyrannous rule of the Duke of Alba, to the detriment and mockery of hys Maiesties promise, diuers notable personages, trusting

sting to the sayd promise, as well of his ma
iestye, as of her hyghnes the Gouernesse,
haue bene taken and throwen in dark dun
geons, whose goodes (with also the goodes
of those that fled) were without exception
of religion, contrary to all iustice, customs,
Statutes, lawes and ordinaunces, taken a
way and confiscate. So that it seemeth that
in the ende none shall be exempt, of what
religion soeuer they be, so they haue anye
thing to lose.

And notwithstanding that wee for our
owne person, during the tyme of our Go-
uernment, yea euer since we came to mas
tate, haue desired nothing so muche as the
stablishing and encreasing of the authority,
power and force of his Maiesty, the main-
tenaunce of peace, quietnes and tranquil-
litie, as well of the country, as of the Sub-
iectes, lykewyse that all mischiefe, domage
and interest, to our power, and as much as
in vs lyeth, might bee farre remoued from
thē: as heretofore, not sparing our goods,
yea with great daunger of our lyfe (be it
spoken without brag) we haue effectually
declared.

Yet now Wout any regard hereto, we

(as

(as well as other faultes both of high and low degree) by an vnorderlye citacion, and blasphemous proclamation, vnder coulour as though we had attempted the superioritie of the kynges Maiesty of Spayne, and as committing Crimen rebellionis, without any sufficient president, or reasonable sentence, by violence are depriued of all our country and subiectes, goods moueable and immoueable: which to this daye they kepe violently from vs, against al humain & diuine right.

And it is maruelous, with what boldnes our aduersaries dare propose, that we haue attempted any thing against the authoritie of the kinges Maiestie, and gone about to take possession of his country, when without any farther excuse, the contrary is manifest, by our willing resignation of our charge and gouernment of the countries of Holland, Seland, and Vtreght, also the geuing ouer of the principall townes and Fortresses in those partes: and to auoyde all suspition, we went not secretly away in to Germany, but publickly in the sight of all men.

Which we would not haue done, if our

minde,

mynde, intent, or enterprise, had beene enclined to rebellion (as our aduersaries for cloake of their horrible tyranny, wrongfully lay to our charge) And we could be well pleased, yea we most humblye desire, that the principall Captaines, Officers, and Officers of such Townes, Fortresses, & Castels as were then, (according to our gouernment) vnder our charge, (that the truth may the better be knowen) may be diligently examined, if they were euer required by vs, to yeld or geue vp any towne, Fortresse, or Castel to our particular profit. Of which pointes as of all other affaires of the low country, ye shal finde more ample declaration in our iustification now of late set forth by vs.

But if we, which haue done so good and faithfull seruice to his Maiestie, neither sparing body nor goods (without brag be it spoken) yea beyng at this present ready with all our heart to do much more, be now reuompensed with such blasphemous accusations (against God & all Iustice) & further our aduersaries assayle vs by so many subtill practises, let all good men weighe by themselues, how intollerable it is to vs to beare.

With

With all which tyrānyes aforesayd, and innumerable other violences, our aduersaries with their adherents are not satisfyed: but more manifestly to shew their rage and crueltie, haue not long since taken out of the Towne of Louain, our welbeloued sonne, the Earle of Bueren (where we had placed hym to continue in study, that he might hereafter be better able to serue his Maiestie) with intent to cary hym into Spaine, as in deede they haue done.

Besides that the Duke of Alba, not long since, more clearely to shew his bloudthyrsty tyrānny, hath taken and cruelly put to death aboue three score Gentlemē and Noblemen, with other notable and rich personages and Burgeses of the towne of Bruxelles, with an infinite number in other Townes, whose goodes he hath confiscate and taken away, agaynst all right and Iustice. Wherby it is to be presumed, that he goeth about to destroy and deface all the the Nobilitie, yea the Ogle it selfe.

Yet all this could not satisfie thē, but that the two Earles of Egmont and of Horne of famous memory, notwithstanding their faythfull seruice heretofore, in so many warres,

seares, to the most mighty Emperour Charles of worthy memory, yea and also to his Maiesty of Spaine, so many yeares, with so great charge, in such daunger of body (as all the world knoweth) without being heard, without any forme of accustomed processe used in such case, (not onely against all Gods and mans law, but also against all Statutes of the Empire) hath cruelly put them to death by the sword: and that with such great dishonor & shame, not only of ỳ Lordes iustified, but also of their notable frendes and parentes, as to set vp their heades for a spectacle to all the world vpon staues and forkes.

Further immediatly after the sayd execution, they toke a fresh, more then v. hundreth persons prisoners.

Which tyranny and incredible persecution and fury of the Duke of Alba, hath driuen all men into such feare, that now of late an infinite number, of both religions, are withdrawen and fled away, for feare of this generall tyranny without exception of Religion.

And the sayd Duke of Alba maketh his vaunt openly, to pursue and seeke out to

the

their beds, not onely vs, but also all those which (by Gods diuine prouidence) are escaped hys tyranny, as it appeareth dayly by examples before our eyes.

And forasmuch as hereby, the intent and enterprise of the Duke, with his couetous & bloudthirsty adherentes, doth manifestly appeare to tend not only to the depriuyng of vs, and all other godmen, from such temporall goodes as God hath giuen vs, but the vtter destruction of our bodyes and goodes, yea to the finall ouerthrow of the true doctrine of the Gospell and confirmation of theyr horrible and Idolatrous Popery: & so to depriue vs of spirituall giftes, which are to be preferred before all worldly giftes. Nether is there any hope (hys highnesse, (according vnto his naturall clemency & gentlenesse) will haue regard vnto it, considering that our aduersaryes, through theyr accustomed subtilities, haue not bene ashamed to mope hys Maiesty against hys owne onely sonne, yea so farre as to cause hym to prison: and likewise that our complaintes and supplications are not deliuered to hys Maiesty as they ought, nether is there any audience gyuen vnto vs.

constraigned & enforced with also our Allies, Lordes and frendes, for the maintenaunce and defence of our selues and the low Countreys, but chiefly for the Imperiall Maiesty our Soueraigne Lord, and hys welbeloued sonne, pretendyng right and interest therto in tyme to come, and finally for the profit of all the Empyre, as also of the pitie and compassion, whiche we haue on the cõplayntes that we haue receyued of some of his Maiesties good subiects, to take in hand in the name of God this defence, agaynst the fury & rage of the Duke of Alba and his adherentes, as the onely and extreme meane, seyng that no fayre meanes will serue. And would haue wished (if it had bene possible) not to haue taken this way, as may playnly appeare by our to to long pacience without further proofe.

By which aforesayd defence, we call God to record, that we pretend none other thyng, but onely the increasing of the glory of God, the bringing in again of his word, and the aduauncemẽt of the same, and that his Maiesty, with his Countrey and subiectes

and that hereafter all good & due obedience may be yelded to hym and hys true ſucceſſours in all thinges: to the end that hauyng remoued the great tyranny of the Duke of Alba and hys adherētes, and delinered the ſayd Countrey frō forraine ſouldiours, they may be gouerned accordyng to their priuiledges, contracts, ordināces & Statuts, yea ſuch as his Maieſty hym ſelfe hath ſworne & promiſed vnto thē. And that theſe poore Chriſtians which are driuē away, perſecuted and empriſoned, maye returne to their wiues and children, and enioy againe ſuch goodes and moueables, as haue bene violently taken away from them by force. And that our perſon (which they go about by day, by night, ſecretly and openly to entrap, yea euē in our bed) may be in ſufficiēt aſſuraunce, and our goodes duely reſtored.

And if herein we may obtayne ſufficient aſſuraunce (as is ſayd) we do declare and offer by theſe preſentes, not onely to leaue of this our defence whiche we haue taken in hād, but further we proteſt to the whole world, that our intēt was neuer other, but to procure the aduauncement of the honor:

fite and weale of the Countrey, with the augmentyng and encreasing therof.

Wherefore, we hope that all those that haue Germans harts as well high as lowe, that loue honor and vertue, and contrariwise hate all tyranny and shedding of innocēt bloud, especially of those that are of our true Christian religion, and desire to confesse the same both with hart & mouth, that vndoubtedly they will detest this horrible and vnspeakeable tyranny, yea so cruell as the like was neuer heard of in any Christian country. Chiefly considering the great daunger and perill (without God of his great mercy prevent it) into the whiche the whole Empire may vndoubtedly fall, that not only they wil not be easly perswaded to defend & cōtinue this horrible tyranny wt ye oppression & extirpacion of our christian religion, and extreame persecution of body and life, honor and goods of so many good, faithfull and innocent people, yea such as thirst for the woorde of God, but that rather they will esteeme this our vnauoydable and enforced defence, for none other but

[illegible] vpon great and weighty occasions. And therefore our dutye is (as being a member borne vnto the Empire, and of duty that we ought to haue of poore desolate and persecuted Christians) to counsell, succour, and assist as much as in vs lieth, to the end that this horrible and vnspeakeable tyranny be diligently and earnestly abolished & driuen away, and that the poore Christians (which are banished and wrongfully persecuted) may be defended and maintayned, & not so oppressed, persecuted, martyred, and so miserably and diuersly murthered and slaine as they are at this presente, some by fier, and some by water, and all for confession of the true and Christian Religion.

Thus doing ech man shall do the prayse worthy worke of a Christian, and a worke agreeable to God, as tending to the aduancement of his worde, the comfort, profite, and wealth of so many good Christians as are greeuously persecuted, oppressed, and imprisoned, and likewise to the whole Empyre of Germanye a good continuall and durable peace.

Wherin we offer our selues, with like

wise